CLAIMS PENDING

What is claimed is:

Claims 1 to 53 (canceled)

54. (original) A method of stabilizing a hydroquinone composition having a pH of about 5.5 to about 8.0 comprising:

adding a cationic salt of acidic ascorbyl esters.

55. (original) The method of claim 54 wherein the pH is about 5.5 to about 7.5.

56. (original) The method of claim 54 wherein the pH is about 6.0 to about 7.5.

57. (original) The method of claim 54 wherein the hydroquinone is present in about 1 to about 12 %.

58. (original) The method of claim 54 wherein the hydroquinone is present in about 2 to about 10 %.

59. (original) The method of claim 54 wherein the hydroquinone is present in about 2 to about 8 %.

60. (original) The method of claim 54 wherein the hydroquinone is present in about 3 to about 4 %.

61. (original) The method of claim 54 wherein the hydroquinone is present in about 4 %.

62. (original) The method of claim 54 further comprising a water-soluble antioxidant.

63. (original) The method of claim 62 wherein the antioxidant comprises sulfite.

64. (original) The method of claim 62 wherein the antioxidant comprises sodium metabisulfite.

65. (original) The method of claim 64 wherein the sodium metabisulfite is present in at least about 0.05%.

66. (original) The method of claim 64 wherein the sodium metabisulfite is present at about 0.05% to about 0.5%.

67. (original) The method of claim 54 wherein the cationic salt comprises an inorganic salt.

68. (original) The method of claim 54 wherein the cationic salt comprises magnesium ascorbyl phosphate.

69. (original) The method of claim 68 wherein the magnesium ascorbyl phosphate is present in at least about 0.1%.

70. (original) The method of claim 68 wherein the magnesium ascorbyl phosphate is present at about 0.25 to about 3%.

71. (original) The method of claim 68 wherein the magnesium ascorbyl phosphate is present at about 0.25 to about 1%.

72. (original) The method of claim 62 wherein the antioxidant comprises sodium metabisulfite and the cationic salt comprises magnesium ascorbyl phosphate.

73. (original) The method of claim 72 wherein the sodium metabisulfite is present in at least about 0.05% and the magnesium ascorbyl phosphate is present in at least about 0.5%.

74. (original) The method of claim 54 wherein the cationic salt comprises an amino acyl derivative.

75. (original) The method of claim 74 wherein the cationic salt comprises aminopropyl ascorbyl phosphate.

76. (original) The method of claim 54 wherein the cationic salt comprises a sodium ascorbyl phosphate.

Claims 77 to 106 (canceled)